

**Minutes of the 47<sup>th</sup> full Healthwatch Warwickshire Board Meeting**  
**Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020**  
**10.00am to 12.00pm**  
**MS Teams Conference Call**

**Present:**

Liz Hancock (EH) - Chair	Gita Patel (GP)
Trevor Wright (TW) - Vice Chair	John Copping (JC)
Mike Flaxman (MF) - Chair FAG	Jerry Roodhouse (JR)
Leonard Harvey (LH)	

**In Attendance:**

Chris Bain (CB) - Chief Executive, Claire Jackson (CJ) - Head of Operations, Su Jenkins (SJ) - Authorised Representative, Lucy Dean (LD) - minuting.

**1) Welcome and Apologies**

Apologies received from Paul Tolley.

**2) Declarations of conflict of interest**

Liz Hancock, Chief Executive, Mary Ann Evans Hospice  
Trevor Wright, Councillor, Warwick District Council  
Jerry Roodhouse, Councillor, Warwickshire County Council

**3) Minutes from the previous meeting**

The minutes of the Healthwatch Warwickshire (HWW) Board meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020 were agreed to be an accurate record of proceedings.

**4) Matters Arising**

The Chair announced that this would be TW's last meeting, he is stepping down from the HWW Board due to a conflict of interest with a new role which he is starting soon. On behalf of the Board, The Chair thanked Trevor for his valuable contributions to HWW and wished him all the best in his new role.

For the foreseeable future we will be holding meetings virtually, and the Chair will sign minutes electronically - all Board members were happy with the arrangements.

**ACTION:** LD to add *Performance against contract* as an agenda item for the next Board meeting and for subsequent meetings.

**Previous Item:** *all to feedback with suggestions on content of future agendas*; It was agreed that the meeting agenda will be left as it is for the moment, due to current circumstances. To be reviewed at a future date.

CJ informed the board that the workplan had just been completed and checked by CB. The workplan is different than envisaged at the start of the year because of the current climate HWW is working in- therefore, an interim work plan has been created that will be shared with the public and outlines what we will be focussing on moving forward.

The Staff skills audit and CJ's report was shared by email to Board directors after the previous meeting.

## 5) Approve budget for 2020-2021

Thanks to MF and CJ who put the budget together. The outturn for last year (2019-2020) is subject to Audit. There have been some difficulties with the bank and Sage which have now been resolved.

In the 2020-2021 budget there is a small forecast overspend due to increased accommodation costs and a modest CPI staff pay increase. MF noted that HWW need to apply for an indexed funding increase at the end of the current 3-year contract period to account for inflation and maintain viability.

Budgeted £3,000 for the Deaf Rights to Access Project, similar to the Homeless RAP spend.

It was noted that HWW is not in a position to access any grants that are available at the moment, as we haven't furloughed any staff. In the long term we do need to find additional income sources; the work last year with coordinating the Long Term Plan Survey and with SWFT (digital portal) was beneficial, well received and will hopefully lead to similar opportunities in the future.

We have agreed to partner with Warwick Medical School on a bid for the moral dimensions of treatment under Covid-19 and the clinical decisions faced, to ensure that the patient voice is represented.

All Board members were in agreement with the FAG Chair's recommendation to approve the budget for 2020 - 2021 and the pay increase for staff of 1.7%.

## 6) Chair's Report

Thanks to CB and the staff team for their resilience and for keeping the important work of HWW going, the Chair has attended one of the staff team meetings. It seems that virtual/online working is a possible new way for everyone to work, including HWW.

Meetings attended:

The Chair attended part of a meeting with Simon Gilby of CWPT; and a briefing session with the Health and Wellbeing Board, although was only allowed to watch and listen, not comment.

### 6.1 Draft 4-year strategy

The Chair has started work on the strategy but it is difficult to see what health and social care will look like, and the role of HWW with in it, with the ever changing current situation.

CB has the draft strategy and suggested blending it with the Engagement Strategy that has been written for the lockdown period to form a coherent plan.

ACTION - CB to finish the 4-year/ Engagement Strategy document and circulate for review.

JR commented that there is a lot of Engagement work to be done - particularly with Care homes. County councillors are receiving daily briefing with figures - JR will forward on to CB.

ACTION - JR to forward council briefing to CB.

CB updated that PPE stocks are adequate in care homes and the acute hospitals, as detailed in the weekly Directors Briefings being circulated. There is more of a challenge around testing, it is a matter of debate whether the testing facilities are adequate for care homes requirements. Staff levels (in care homes and hospitals) are safe, absences are not as high as anticipated.

### 6.2 Chair recruitment

In light of the recent resignation of two Board members, HWW now has two vacant positions to fill as well as looking at succession planning for the position of Chair.

It was agreed to proceed with recruitment for position of Board member/Directors only at this time; putting the recruitment of Chair, Vice-chair positions on hold.

Concern was expressed about the impact of this on the current Chair - who confirmed that there is minimal pressure from the HWW Chair role at the moment due to remote working, and effective working from the CE and staff team; so workload is manageable.

TW has been preparing the Chair Recruitment pack, has received comments and will finalise papers before leaving his role, which should help HWW be prepared to recruit a new Chair at a more suitable time.

ACTION: TW to forward updated Chair Recruitment Pack.

ACTION: All Board members to email the Chair with any ideas for who to approach about being a Board member.

## **7) Chief Executive's (CE) Report**

See attached CE report.

A short-term HR (operational) working group is to be set up to assess the impact or potential impact (HR and Finance) on HWW. PT, MF, GP, LH have agreed to be part of the group; EH also available if needed.

The Integrated Care System (ICS) and the merger of the CCGs is going ahead on the same timetable despite current events. Our concern is to make sure that the patient voice is properly heard in the new arrangements which are being put in place under pressure and great pace - risk of the patient voice being side lined.

The Rugby Health and Wellbeing Partnership (HWBP) is more developed than in South Warwickshire and Warwickshire North. Still some confusion about the relationship between the ICS and the HWBP.

A comment was made that the joining of the commissioning groups may slightly change the balance between Coventry and the county (of Warwickshire), and bring the bodies closer together. Seems like quite a strategic change.

Closer alignment of HWW and HW Coventry seems to be in line with this. Coventry City Council has confirmed that HWC's funding arrangement will stay the same for the next 12 months.

## **8) Head of Operations Report**

Claire presented the COVID engagement plan and Work Plan - a public document to go on our website, outlining engagement work & objectives. To be shared, for feedback from the Board.

ACTION: All to review and comment.

The staff team are still working hard to find out how people are experiencing health and care at this time. Ways of working have changed dramatically since the last Board meeting, all staff now working from home; the office phonenumber is still operational.

Performance feedback has been received from the Commissioner, with whom CJ has been having weekly calls; about staff welfare issues, challenges being faced by our service and possible solutions, all of which have been positive. The Commissioner is very supportive of the survey and keen to ensure that our work is not being duplicated by other organisations. The last performance meeting went well. Some items raised: she wanted to see a 4-year strategy (which EH is preparing), finishing the RAP project, publishing of the Digital Report (has been presented to SWFT), and the Quality Framework moving forward.

It was noted that we have worked with HW England to prepare the Coronavirus survey, which is good strategically, compliments given to the team for their work.

JC noted that the NHS have had 750,000 people volunteer in response to the recent call for help - there may be an opportunity to assist; some people might be willing to continue volunteering after the current need passes. It was proposed that we could do a survey to the 80% that haven't been called up to contribute yet. However, there would be data protection issues to consider.

There are now work streams being driven down through the Resilience Forum - one of them is Health & Community, thinking about sustainability. We want to complement the work being done.

Homeless - need to talk to portfolio holder - a lot of work been done.

Local groups of volunteers have been set up to support the community eg. Kenilworth COVID support group - they are hearing a lot of info 'on the ground', it was suggested we could link up with them e.g. for the survey. Warwickshire County Council has the details of these groups. Hopefully in the long run the Health service will recognise the importance of using the community, that lessons will be learned.

## 9) Priority Project Update

Some of the projects we had envisaged are no longer appropriate, e.g. Dementia project where it was envisaged that we would conduct this piece of work in hospitals would not work online. The COVID-19 Survey will be instrumental in telling us how we should move our engagement forward. We will be bearing in mind that there is a proportion of society that are not online, and we need to still engage with them. HWW needs to remain flexible in order to adapt to the changing landscape.

### 9.1 COVID-19 survey

HWW have distributed the survey in the past week online, asking people about the wider implications of the coronavirus: mental health, communication needs, how they have been able to access other services during this time. The results of the survey could determine what we will need to work on in the future, so we want to get it distributed as far and wide as possible.

ACTION: All to circulate survey, and also complete it themselves.

### 9.2 Discharge project

HWW had been preparing a proposal on patient experience of discharge pathways - started before the outbreak, so the project is now evolving. The original idea was to go into hospitals to meet people, which is clearly not possible at the moment. Conversation to be had with the Commissioner about different ways the project could go ahead still, maybe using discharge packs.

### 9.3 RAP project

RAP project - was meant to conclude in Warwickshire North but some planned workshops could not go ahead due to lockdown. Poonam has been able to carry out a few workshops online and the report has been drafted. The project is drawing to a close but will not just end - leaflets and cards will still be distributed to agencies that we have been working with.

## 10 Reports from Subgroups

### 10.1 HR Performance and Staff welfare at home

The organisation has been facing new pressures since March. Each individual has adapted differently to working from home, each with different circumstances at home. The HR working /task group would be valued, to work on these issues, e.g. staff appraisals, how these will work - online is not the same as face to face.

Staff have worked incredibly hard, under different pressures to keep the organisation going and adapting to new ways of working. Will need to invest in training in new ways of working, e.g. online working.

Credit was given to the staff for adapting short term; it is also hard to adapt long term when there are so many unknowns. Contingency plans will be needed going forward.  
It was raised that a lot of organisations have policies in place for working from home, as part of their Health and safety policy. It is the employer's responsibility to ensure that the working environment (whether in an office or at home) is suitable. Need understanding from staff members of what the concerns are.  
Daily staff team calls are now held to check that people are ok - if not then CB or CJ will call up an individual to check afterwards.

Work of the task group will include:

A review of the current premises on Clemens St, with regard to returning to work, it may not be suitable due to insufficient ventilation, physical separation, hand washing facilities etc. Risk assessments will be also be needed for home working environments. Timescale - could be from current situation, going into summer next year.

## **10.2 Finance and Audit Group**

Covered under item 7.

## **11 Volunteer update**

Some volunteers have been making scrubs for social services. One of the volunteers reported that they were surprised to see advice leaflets (from the council) delivered, with no mention of Healthwatch on them.

SJ attended a cancer board meeting virtually, a lot is going on in the cancer arena - surgery has been taking place in private hospitals, some moving back into SWFT.

Dilys & Jackie have been involved in the community group in Kenilworth. All volunteers are looking forward to being involved more in the future when circumstances allow.

The volunteers helped the staff team to finalise the COVID survey - they are being involved in work wherever possible.

## **12 AOB**

NHS England will be sending out the message about 'business as usual', encouraging people to still use NHS services for non-covid related reasons; as will HWW.

### **Summary of Actions:**

*Item 4* - LD to add *Performance against contract* as an agenda item for the next, and subsequent Board meetings.

*Item 6.1* - CB to finish the 4-year/ Engagement Strategy document and circulate for review

*Item 6.1* - JR to forward council briefing to CB.

*Item 6.2* - TW to forward updated Chair Recruitment Pack.

*Item 6.2* - All to email the Chair with any ideas for potential new Board members

*Item 9.1* - All to circulate and complete Covid-19 survey

## **13 Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will be held digitally, from 10.00am to 12.00pm on Tuesday 14th July 2020.

Minutes Approved by: .....Liz Hancock.....



Signed: ..... ..

Date: .....20/05/20.....